

# Returning to the Workforce after Raising a Family

“Women who make the most seamless transitions back into the workforce are those who don't ever leave it completely.” Lack of confidence is the biggest obstacle for most women thinking about returning to the workforce.

## GENERAL TIPS

1. **Be positive.** Maybe you have had some trouble in the past and have started to feel discouraged. That is understandable—many adults with a great deal of experience get passed over in favor of more recent graduates. The important thing to remember is what sets you apart. Focusing on what you *have* done rather than what you haven't is crucial to changing your mindset and projecting an aura of confidence.
2. **Know what you are looking for.** Do you want to re-enter the same field you worked in before? Are you hoping to make a “fresh start” into something completely different? Knowing the answer will determine how you conduct your job search.
3. **Don't apologize.** Being a parent is hard work, and it is as valid a choice as remaining in the workforce full-time. Furthermore, the skills gained while parenting may give you an advantage over other candidates who lack that experience. With that in mind, remember that sometimes...
4. **Less is more.** Understanding your history and how it can benefit your future employer will be crucial to your self-confidence. However,

## RESUMES

The key to having an effective resume is to remember this: it's all about marketing! You may be concerned about having a gap in your employment history from the time you spent as a full-time parent. While this situation may be challenging, try not to get discouraged. You can still engage potential employers by including the following information on your resume:

- Volunteer/community activities
- Professional associations/conferences
- Travel
- Skills developed

A *functional* resume format may also be useful, because it avoids drawing unnecessary attention to the employment gap. In a functional resume, the focus is on skills rather than order. The main section will highlight your specific talents and expertise, and work history can be condensed to a short, general list. It is not necessary to include dates on a functional resume. [An example of a functional resume is available.](#)

## RESOURCES

### Websites:

4 Tips to Returning to the Workforce  
<http://info.aiuonline.edu/aiuzine/issue23/theme1.asp>

After 10 Years Away, How Do I Return to the Corporate World?  
<http://www.careerjournal.com/columnists/qanda/obstacles/20051003-qandaobstacles.html>

Chicago Tribune: Back in the swim

[http://www.agewave.com/media\\_maddy/press04\\_02\\_03.html](http://www.agewave.com/media_maddy/press04_02_03.html)

Cover Letters Close Gaps in Employment

<http://www.careerbuilder.com/JobSeeker/careerbytes/CBArticle.aspx?articleID=242&cbRecursionCnt=1&cbsid=c368b787c80c4c41ae9de333bf7bc8-198322753-X0-2>

Finding a Work/Life Balance

[http://executive.seek.com.au/editorial/0-2-13\\_worklife.htm](http://executive.seek.com.au/editorial/0-2-13_worklife.htm)

Extended Mommy Wars Q&A

[http://blogs.businessweek.com/careers/workingparents/blog/archives/2006/03/the\\_extended\\_mo.html](http://blogs.businessweek.com/careers/workingparents/blog/archives/2006/03/the_extended_mo.html)

Moms find it easier to pop back into workforce

<http://www.usatoday.com/educate/college/careers/hottopic22.htm>

Returning to the Workforce

[http://greatfallstribune.gannettonline.com/careerbuilder/career\\_resources04/newarticles/contributors/returningtowork.html](http://greatfallstribune.gannettonline.com/careerbuilder/career_resources04/newarticles/contributors/returningtowork.html)

Returning to Work After an Absence

<http://www.myfuture.edu.au/articles/redirect.asp?ArticleID=194&Location=Home+%5C+The+Facts+%5C+Other+%5C+Articles>

Stay at Home Moms and Stay at Home Dads

<http://careerplanning.about.com/od/stayathomeparents/>

Workforce Reentry Strategies for Sequencing Mothers

<http://wlb.monster.com/articles/sequencing/>

Working Mothers Blog: Issues Concerning Working Mothers

<http://www.allbusiness.com/blog/WorkingMothers/11535/category/368.html>

### **Books:**

Connor, J. R. (1992). *Cracking the Over-50 Job Market*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.\*

Enelow, W. S., & Kursmark, L. M. (2003). *Expert Resumes for People Returning to Work*. Indianapolis, IN: Jist Publishing.\*

Walker, J. E. (2000). *The Age Advantage: Making the Most of Your Midlife Career Transition*. New York, NY: Berkley Books.\*

Wilcox, E. (2003). *The Mom Economy: The Mothers' Guide to Getting Family-Friendly Work*. New York, NY: Berkley Books.\*

\*Available in the Career Services library